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Mr R A Cresswell  
Hartshead Junior and Infant School  
School Lane  
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West Yorkshire  
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Dear Mr Cresswell

### **Short inspection of Hartshead Junior and Infant School**

Following my visit to the school on 1 December 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in November 2010.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

The personal development and well-being of pupils are central to your vision and a strong sense of care and nurture permeates the work of the school. This not only ensures that pupils behave well and are fully engaged in their learning, but that they demonstrate high levels of respect for adults and one another. As a result, pupils enjoy school and seek to benefit from all the school has to offer. You are keen for all pupils to be involved in activities that involve performance. Both sports and performing arts are valued as an extension of learning and personal development, because the school believes that performance ultimately requires the individual to 'deliver' without the immediate support of parents or staff.

Pupils and parents are very positive about the school. Many of the parents who completed Ofsted's online survey (Parent View) took time to share their positive views. Parents confirm how well the school cares for and nurtures their children. They say staff enable pupils to grow in confidence, reach their potential and be well prepared for the next stage of their learning. They speak of a 'strong sense of community' where pupils play their part, and pupils echo this when they say, 'We all stick together.'

You have developed a leadership structure that has ensured greater distribution of responsibility and given staff time to fulfil their roles, so that they now contribute more effectively to school improvement. You recognise and nurture potential and

have become more outward looking to further increase the capacity and effectiveness of leadership.

Your school self-evaluation is accurate, so that the actions you plan are the right ones. For example, you recently identified reading as an area for improvement. Your prompt action means that the teaching of reading has been re-energised and this is resulting in good progress through the increased engagement of pupils and their parents.

Your actions to improve writing, which was an area for improvement at the last inspection, have ensured that standards have risen. This is particularly evident in the early years and Key Stage 1 because of the increased opportunities for early writing and improvements in teaching. You are seeing most-able pupils achieving the standards of which they are capable.

You are ably challenged and supported by the governing body, which has been reconstituted since the last inspection. Governors have the knowledge and skills needed to be effective. The decisions governors make about the allocation of funding have ensured that the school building and environment are of the highest quality, and that disadvantaged pupils receive the teaching and support they need to do very well indeed.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Frequent training ensures that both staff and governors are well aware of what constitutes risk and that you afford the highest priority to keeping pupils safe. You and the governing body ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Record keeping is meticulous. You work closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support they need to keep pupils safe and in education.

### **Inspection findings**

- You, your teachers and governors demonstrate a strong commitment to continuous improvement. Accurate self-evaluation means that you focus on the right things. For example, in 2015, the school saw a dip in the outcomes in reading at the end of Key Stage 2. Your prompt action in response has already excited and engaged all pupils and many parents. Pupils say that in guided reading lessons they enjoy stories so much that they do not want to put books down, and even take a 'peek at the next page when the teacher isn't looking'.
- During our visits to lessons, we saw some teachers using questions skilfully to deepen pupils' understanding, and in the early years and Key Stage 1 you have made sure that there is a good balance of phonics teaching (sounds and the letters they represent) and reading for meaning. This is ensuring that the dip seen in reading in 2015 is being addressed effectively.

- Since the last inspection, you have successfully tackled the weaknesses in writing. Pupils, in particular boys, are more engaged and there are more opportunities to write in different curriculum subjects and for different purposes. Your work to close the gaps in boys' writing has consistently borne fruit over the last three years. The quality of writing in relation to pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling has also improved, because the teaching of these skills is strong and teachers check that pupils use and apply what they learn.
- We observed a high-quality mathematics lesson where pupils were challenged to explain how they could work out the perimeter of a large shape. The steps in teaching ensured that all pupils had the opportunity to use and apply their knowledge, and show what they knew and understood. Nevertheless, it is clear from our scrutiny of pupils' work that providing consistent challenge for most-able pupils in mathematics is an area of work that needs further development.
- Strong leadership in the early years and in Key Stage 1 has secured the improvements needed in teaching and outcomes. You have made sure that the youngest pupils, whatever their starting points, make good progress. For example, you have taken action to ensure that those who arrive with higher starting points are suitably challenged in their learning. This is showing in outcomes for the most able at the end of early years and increasingly in Key Stage 1, particularly in writing.
- The work of the special educational needs coordinator ensures that disadvantaged pupils and those pupils with additional needs are well provided for and achieve well. In most instances these pupils do as well as others nationally and, in some instances, better.
- Over time you have developed and distributed leadership so that the school is in a better position to improve teaching and the curriculum. The school is benefiting from being more outward looking and working with other schools to secure future improvements. This has strengthened this small school's capacity to improve.
- Regular monitoring of teaching means that you gather an accurate view of what teachers do, but it does not always focus enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. The work with a fellow headteacher is helping you and your leaders to sharpen the monitoring of teaching.
- Governors know the school well and understand the priorities for continuing development. They have increased the impact of their work and they hold you and the senior teacher to account by asking tough questions and checking your work. Their actions directly inform school priorities.
- The local authority provides good support through the work of the school improvement officer, who knows the school well. He works with the governing body to manage your performance and provides an external view of the school's work and progress. You say you value the support and challenge he brings.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- the monitoring of teaching takes into account more robustly the impact of teaching on pupils' learning
- all teachers have the knowledge and skills they need to teach mathematics effectively, so that the more able pupils make the progress of which they are capable.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Kirklees Metropolitan Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Anne Bowyer  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this one-day inspection I was able to discuss the work of the school with you, your staff and governors. We visited all classrooms to observe teaching and learning and looked at pupils' work to consider the progress they are making and to gather a view of teaching over time. I talked with pupils about what it feels like to be a member of the school community, looked at the online questionnaire (Parent View) and studied a high number of individual responses to it. I observed and spoke with pupils throughout the day and in a short meeting with eight of them. Discussions with a representative of the local authority and four school governors helped to provide additional information. School documentation, assessment information, policies and information posted on the school's website were taken into account.